AMENDMENT

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims, without prejudice, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A compound of the formula:

W–U–Z

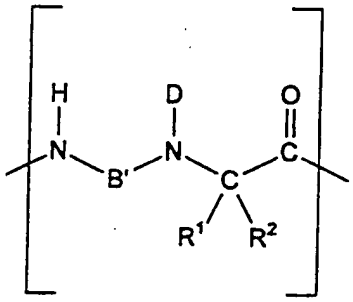
wherein:

W is a hydrogen atom, an amino acid, or a PNA, U contains at least one unit of the formula Y and, optionally, one or more amino acid and/or

PNA,

Z is an OH function, an amino acid, or a PNA,

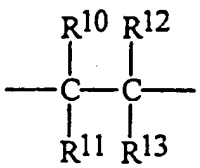
Y is a unit of the formula



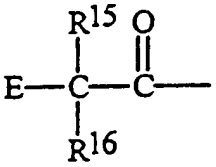
Y

wherein:

B' is a group of the formula:



D is a group of the formula:



wherein the residues R^{10} to R^{13} independently contain up to 20 carbon atoms and independently denote hydrogen atoms or unsubstituted alkyl, alkenyl, alkaryl, aryl, or alicyclic groups, said groups being branched or unbranched, and optionally two each of the residues R^{10} to R^{13}, separated from each other by up to two carbon atoms, are components of a common ring system, which ring system is either an alicyclic monocyclic compound ~~(3-8 ring atoms)~~ comprising 3-8 ring atoms, optionally substituted by a branched or unbranched C_{1-5} alkyl group, or a phenyl ring,

the residues R^{15} and R^{16} independently contain up to 20 carbon atoms and independently denote hydrogen atoms or unsubstituted alkyl, alkenyl, alkaryl, aryl, or alicyclic groups, said groups being branched or unbranched, and optionally the residues R^{15} and R^{16} are components of a common ring system, which ring system is an alicyclic monocyclic compound ~~(3-6 ring atoms)~~ comprising 3-6 ring atoms, optionally substituted by a branched or unbranched C_{1-5} alkyl group,

E is a natural or synthetic nucleobase, optionally substituted by protecting groups and capable of forming Watson-Crick or Hoogsteen base pairs, and the residues R^1 and R^2 are independently hydrogen atoms, alkyl, alkenyl, alkaryl, aryl, or alicyclic groups containing up to 20 carbons, whilst at least one of the residues R^1 and R^2 is one or more phosphite ester, phosphonic acid, or carbaborane functions.

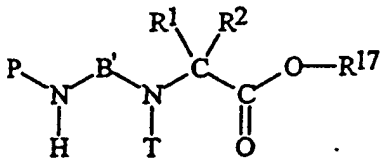
2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein W is a hydrogen atom, U is one or more units of formula Y, and Z is an OH group.

4. (Previously Presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the residues R^1 and R^2 exhibits one or more phosphite ester or phosphonic acid functions.

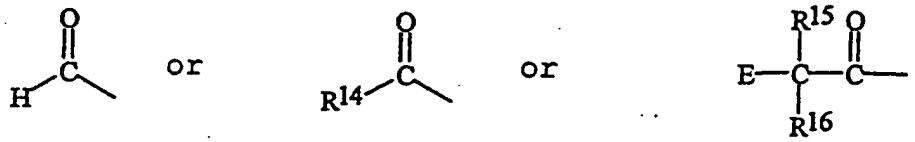
5. (Previously Presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the residues R^1 and R^2 exhibits one or more carbaborane functions.

6. (Currently Amended) A compound of the general formula II:



II

wherein T is hydrogen or a group of the formula:



the residue R^{17} is hydrogen or allyl, benzyl, ethyl, methyl, 2,2,2-trichloro-tert-butyl, 2,2,2-trichloroethyl, α-chloro-(trifluoromethyl)benzyl, 2-(p-toluenesulfonyl)ethyl, diphenyl-methyl, 2-(trimethylsilyl)ethyl, methoxymethyl, (2-trimethyl-silyl)ethoxymethyl, benzyloxymethyl, or (2-methoxy) ethyloxymethyl, the residue P is hydrogen or an amine protecting group, the residue R^{14} is a group of the formula CH_nX_{3-n}, ~~(n = 0 to 3, X = F, Cl, Br, I)~~ wherein n = 0 to 3, and X = F, Cl, Br, or I, a phenyl group, or a *p*-methoxyphenyl group, and B′, E, the residues R^1 and R^2, and R^{15} and R^{16} are defined as in claim 1.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously Presented) The compound according to claim 6, wherein the amine protecting group is an Fmoc, Boc, Cbz, Mmt, or Bhoc protecting group.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)